



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES CHILD SUPPORT ADVISORY BOARD

Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors

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2009

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Vacant

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*Fourth District*  
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Scarlet Treu

*Fifth District*  
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Steven J. Golightly

*Los Angeles Superior Court*  
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## EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

*California Department of  
Child Support Services*  
Mary Lawrence

*Franchise Tax Board*  
Debbie Strong

## CHILD SUPPORT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES APRIL 23, 2009

### Present

2<sup>nd</sup> District, Pat Miller  
3<sup>rd</sup> District, Lucy T. Eisenberg, Esq., Chair  
3<sup>rd</sup> District, Honey Kessler Amado  
4<sup>th</sup> District, Jean Cohen  
5<sup>th</sup> District, Reginald Brass  
5<sup>th</sup> District, Susan Speir, Vice Chair  
Steven Golightly, CSSD  
Gene A. Franklin, Sr., CIO  
Silvia Valencia, DPSS  
Kristine Reiser-Juick, Superior Court

### Guests

Jennifer Coultas, CSSD  
David Kilgore, CSSD  
Lawrence Hill, 721 Union

### Staff

Lee Millen, Executive Office, BOS  
Andrew Sevrin, Executive Office, BOS

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eisenberg called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. in Room 372, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration.

### APPROVE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2009

On motion of Vice Chair Speir, seconded by Member Franklin and unanimously carried, the minutes of February 26, 2009, were approved as submitted.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO INCLUDE: CURRENT BUDGET STATUS; PERSONNEL CHANGES; STATUS OF PIAP APPROVAL – STEVEN GOLIGHTLY

Steven Golightly, Director, CSSD, reported the following:

**Current Budget Status:** The State budget process is ongoing, and CSSD's

### Absent

2<sup>nd</sup> District, Paula Leftwich  
4<sup>th</sup> District, Scarlet Treu  
Susan Jakubowski, DCFS  
Mary Lawrence, DCSS  
Debbie Strong, Franchise Tax Board

initial allocation was presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 22, 2009. Los Angeles County is not implementing furloughs as Orange, Riverside, San Diego and San Bernardino Counties have. Also, the May 19 elections could dramatically alter the County's budget, and the State Controller has advised that the State is short an additional \$6-8 billion.

In response to Chair Eisenberg, Director Golightly reported that there are 104 CSSD staff positions (of which 59 are vacant) being eliminated due to budget cuts; these include IT staffing used for the CSE conversion. A countywide hiring freeze does not permit backfilling vacant budgeted items, however, exams are still conducted and promotion lists are promulgated for use when the hiring freeze lifts.

The faltering economy has created a rise in claims, at the rate of 350 cases per day. Although this number seems high, the total number of cases opened last year was 550 a day. Philip Browning, Director, DPSS, has noted that many are new welfare cases, so the need for more County aid has increased while resources have remained flat. In response to Vice Chair Speir, it was reported that this data is based on cases that have been approved as opposed to referral cases; 50% of all applications are denied in that eligibility standards require that a family of four not receive more than \$200 per month in unemployment insurance.

The Governor added \$2.8 million to child support this year directed into "Early Intervention", which consists of specific actions that enhance customer service in the early stages of a case, i.e., communicating with the NCP before a court date, when the court order occurs, before child support payments begin, and communicating with the employer to ensure an understanding of the terms of the wage assignment. Also, the County has frozen \$550 thousand of CSSD's budget. Further, last month in Sacramento, Director Jan Sturla, DCSS, awarded "Most Improved Large County" to LA County CSSD for Fiscal Year 2008-09.

**Personnel Changes:** The CEO and the Board of Supervisors assigned Lisa Garrett to assume the duties of Interim Director of the Department of Human Resources. A nationwide search for a new Director is under way. Jennifer Coultas and Fesia Davenport have been assigned duties to cover in her absence.

**Status of PIAP Approval:** Director Golightly reported on the four Performance Measures that CSSD has focused on over the last six years (copy on file):

1. Paternity
2. Support Orders
3. Current Support
4. Arrears

Total collections are down from last year's average with the transfer of cases to other County jurisdictions. There were good IRS collections in the middle of March, and FTB collections were delayed a few months by the State Controller due to a State tax problem.

The largest source of collections is Wage Assignments (70-75%) comprised of garnishments. These have been re-classified as IWOs (Income Withholding Orders), and this year IWOs are down by \$2 million.

Jennifer Coultas, Special Assistant, CSSD, reported that the Compromise of Arrears Program (COAP) database showed that for FY 2007-08 Los Angeles County led the state in total arrears collected. From July-September 2008 the number of COAP applications

declined, however, CSSD still considers COAP to be a valuable program and staff has been instructed to help clients navigate through the process to determine their eligibility.

In response to Chair Eisenberg, Ms. Coultas explained that the term "Repayment Amount Approved" refers to the amount the individual is entitled to pay in order to have the rest of their debt cleared. It doesn't necessarily equal the "Compromise Amount Approved." In response to Member Miller, Ms. Coultas reported that although interest is always accrued on arrears payments they are waived on COAP because a settlement is made on a specific amount.

Vice Chair Speir commented that when conferring with Linda Sekany, DCSS, she was informed that COAP is similar to the IRS program of compromise in that documentation (bank statements, etc.) is required. In response to Chair Eisenberg, Ms. Coultas reported that a set formula is used to determine the COAP amount, which is on average 10% of monies owed.

Copies of the CSSD Biennial Report for 2007-09 were distributed and both Ms. Coultas and Outreach Program staff were credited for compiling and organizing the Report. It is an excellent tool for explaining child support to guests, clients, and appointed/elected officials

David Kilgore, Deputy Director, CSSD, reported on the Performance Improvement Action Plan (PIAP). PIAP is a new CSSD plan following the 2008 Corrective Action Plan, and is designed to maintain the Department's drive towards improvement. The Performance Management Plan is an abbreviated version of PIAP. The Plan stays in place until the Department can show arrears and collections have gone above fifty percent for a six-month period.

Mr. Golightly reported that the Enterprise Customer Service Solution (ECSS), which prepares client personal data for county operators answering the State 866 phone line, is a major automation conversion to the Call Center. Mr. Kilgore added that another development is the CSE State website, which informs clients of their account information without using the Call Center, and CP and NCP account data is updated online. This ensures expeditious and accurate wage assignments.

### **REVIEW AND DISCUSS PERFORMANCE MEASURES – DAVID KILGORE**

In response to Member Cohen, Mr. Kilgore reported that paternity establishment in Los Angeles County can be greater than 100% because the denominator is set at September of the previous year, and it does not change from month to month with newly opened and out-of-county transfers added through the year.

The number of Call Center Inquiries decreased in March because the system conversion occurred on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that month. Since the State is capturing all IVR calls the department is only capturing local calls. The average wait time ranged from 27:15 minutes in January to 7:42 minutes in March. Mr. Golightly noted that he was pleased with the Call Center's performance, and his goal is to reduce the wait time to five minutes.

In response to Chair Eisenberg, Mr. Kilgore referred to the "Call Center Daily Statistical Reporting" chart, which shows heavy volume of deflected calls on Mondays for the month of

March 2009. The average number of calls received on Mondays was five thousand and required that all staff take phone calls to ease the load. Calls taper off in the week, but the Tuesday following a holiday is equally heavy. Following ECSS conversion, the average talk time dropped from seven minutes to five; the time decrease was attributed to ECSS enabling client data to appear quickly on the system.

**REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2008-09-  
DAVID KILGORE**

Mr. Kilgore reported on the Performance Management Plan, which is an abbreviated version of the PIAP. The first two goals are directed towards Paternity Establishment and Support Orders. The strategies for both are an improvement in the expedited process of 75 percent for the first six months and 90 percent within a year. The Summons & Complaint (S&C) is generated once the NCP address is known, and the system calculates the support amount based upon reported earnings information. The support amount is included in the proposed judgment.

Chair Eisenberg noted that if it takes six months on the average for the order to be established, the NCP already owes substantial arrears with interest accumulated. CSSD staff was asked to provide a survey report of S&C service at the next CSAB meeting. Vice Chair Speir added that another situation that creates a time-lag is a "Set Aside" order, because when it is filed a court date is set for a "Set Aside", and a second court is required to determine the amount of arrears. Because of the delay in setting two court dates, by the time the case gets acted on the NCP can be a year and a half behind in his payments. If a "Set Aside" and court order could occur on the same day, total arrears could be determined that same day. This would ensure a true arrears total and less impact on the court calendar. In response to Member Miller, Mr. Kilgore advised that with the epidemic of mass firings and layoffs there has been a rapid increase in modification requests. Ms. Coultas noted that there have been 7,500 expedited modifications requests since September 2008.

Mr. Kilgore summarized three goals. Under Goal 3.3, an eligible case will be closed if an NCP cannot be located within three years. Regarding Goal 3.4, every division has different tasks for IWO payments. In Goal 3.5, newer units require work performance improvement case lists in order to increase the current support percentage. Chair Eisenberg recommended a review of the remaining goals at future meetings.

**REPORT ON NEW QADA UNIT, TO INCLUDE: HOW QAPI HAS BEEN  
RESTRUCTURED; ARE THERE FUNCTIONS THAT WERE PERFORMED BY QAPI  
THAT WILL NO LONGER BE PERFORMED BY QADA – DAVID KILGORE**

QAPI (Quality Assurance Performance Improvement) is now called QADA (Quality Assurance Data Analysis). The main difference between the two is that QADA has taken on new responsibilities; QADA will supply analysis for review, will be used as a research mechanism, will look at performance, and will conduct trend analysis.

**CASE OPENINGS; INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CASES OPENED; REVIEW OF CASE  
OPENING PROCESS – DAVID KILGORE/LORI CRUZ**

Chair Eisenberg requested a report on the new processing of C2G case openings.

Mr. Kilgore reported that the intake process unit, which previously received paper-based DPSS case referrals, now receives 1,300 electronic service requests from DPSS and 100 paper-based applications per day; DPSS provides 90-95% of all case referrals to CSSD.

Mr. Golightly noted the lack of an incentive for the CP to report NCP data when there is a domestic violence issue, or because she can receive child support privately from the NCP and collect welfare payments concurrently. Penalties for withholding information vary from state to state, i.e. Mississippi withholds welfare payments for the entire family if the CP does not provide information, whereas California only withholds the CP's share of welfare.

Member Brass reported that he advises his clients to go to court to avert any future legal complications. Mr. Golightly noted that the NCPs in general want to care for their children but sometimes have issues with the CP, CSSD, or the courts, however, Mr. Brass' clients do listen and heed to his effective explanation of viable options.

Ms. Coultas reported that CSSD received a grant from the Women In Film Association to create a PSA (Public Service Announcement) film with professional actors to be shown on cable television and YouTube encouraging NCPs to report to their nearest CSSD office. The commercial is targeted towards men with a child support message and should improve departmental performance.

Mr. Kilgore reported that a service request is an approved application from DPSS that is forwarded to CSSD for case creation and processing. There are quite a few steps in processing a Service Request, and the CID (Case Initiation Division) processes Service Requests for Foster care, CalWorks, DCT (Out of County services), and Medical Assistance. In response to Chair Eisenberg, Mr. Kilgore explained that a case opening is when staff open a shell, input any CP or DPSS data, the NCP is found under Co-Locate, and a State number is generated. The divisions work with the CID and Co-Locate cases, and designated staff are assigned to conduct case research using the DPSS LEADER system to check for changes/updates. A case can be opened in the Division, CID or in Co-Locate.

Chair Eisenberg requested a flow chart on the aforementioned case processing from beginning to end, and referenced Director Golightly's program titled "Cradle to Grave", which provides an A-Z case management with the same CSO and NCP. Director Golightly added that a pilot on Cradle to Grave was launched last year in the Palmdale office, where a newly opened case from Palmdale gets automatically assigned to a CSO in the area. Additionally, if an NCP visits the Palmdale office, they are met by their case worker in the lobby. This has created a lot of positive feedback and has proven beneficial in that duplicate case worker efforts are eliminated. A representative from the Palmdale office will be present at the next meeting to speak on the Cradle to Grave pilot.

#### **ECSS; UPDATE ON TRANSITION; CURRENT CALL CENTER PROTOCOLS – DAVID KILGORE**

Mr. Kilgore reported a smooth transition since the March 23, 2009 conversion to ECSS. In response to Chair Eisenberg, Mr. Kilgore noted that when clients call the 1-866 State number and they authenticate, system information requested is provided, such as upcoming appointments and last payment dates. CSSD handles the IV-D cases and the State handles

the non IV-D cases; a non IV-D case is usually a private legal case.

### **CSE PROCEDURES FOR RETRIEVING MONEY FROM WELFARE**

Vice Chair Speir requested the following information on money retrieval from welfare overpayments: (1) Can the DPSS computer identify the Unreimbursed Assistance Pool (UAP), the money that is owed to the welfare system, and (2) *is* CSSD notified when the UAP has been paid in full and what is done to prevent additional money being paid; and (3) if overpayments are made how are they retrieved? Silvia Valencia, DPSS, reported that DPSS would only know about an overpayment if the payment is transmitted over the interface, and money reimbursed is not identified unless the system shows an outstanding balance. Also, Client overpayments are returned if an audit of the UAP balance is found to be in error.

Mr. Golightly reported that an early version of the retrieval process was called the Retrieval Gram, which was simple to execute. DPSS, however, does not have a trigger in their CSE system that notifies an overpayment, although an audit shows a client's negative balance. With the ARS system, CSSD had to go through Sacramento to get a local Retrieval Gram to receive the funds via an elaborate 10-step process. With CSE it is much more complex because it reviews three different time periods in that prior cases date back to the formation of the State Disbursement Unit (SDU). In addition, staff must request a Logical Collection ID Number from the State, a specific retrieval from DPSS, and thereafter several adjustments are made to the financial accounts in the system. Vice Chair Speir requested that Ms. Valencia respond to her questions at the next meeting.

### **MATTERS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA (TO BE PRESENTED AND PLACED ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING)**

Vice Chair Speir requested the following CSSD staff reports at the next meeting:

- It appears that health insurance letters are being sent to NCPs after the children have reached the age of majority. Can the system be modified to avoid this?
- NCPs who are cooperating with the COAP have letters sent to their employers requesting income data. These letters should not be generated, and this action only serves to agitate clients.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Eisenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.